

Breastfeed your Baby!

Breastfeeding has numerous advantages – for you and for your baby.

- Promotes closer mother-child bonding
- Decreases the risk of infections in your baby
- Decreases the risk of sudden infant death
- Decreases the risk of childhood obesity
- Decreases the risk of allergies or asthma for your baby
- Decreases the mother's long term risks of breast and uterine cancer and risk for heart disease
- Helps the mother return to her pre-pregnancy weight faster
- ...and it's free

If you are a Baltimore County resident, call

410-887-6000

to get more information about breastfeeding.

Baltimore County does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, color, physical or mental disability, marital status, political affiliation, creed, religion, or national origin. Upon prior request, provisions will be made to accommodate individuals with disabilities. This brochure is available in alternative format upon request. Baltimore County complies with the ADA.

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Quit smoking if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.

Smoking during pregnancy:

- Increases the risks of a stillbirth – the baby dying before delivery
- Increases the risk of premature birth and of low birth weight
- Increases the risks that the baby will develop Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)

Smoking after the baby is born:

- Increases the risks of sudden infant death
- Increases the risk of infection in the baby including ear infections
- Increases the risks of lung problems in the baby including asthma

Get help to quit smoking by calling

410-887-3828



Baltimore County Department of Health

Healthy people living, working, and playing in Baltimore County

Gregory Wm. Branch, M.D., MBA, CPE – Health Officer and Director
Baltimore County Executive Kevin Kamenetz and the Baltimore County Council

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Pregnant?



*Information and resources
for a healthy pregnancy, a safe delivery,
and the best outcome possible
for you and your baby!*

Get started early on prenatal care!

As soon as you find out you are pregnant, you should contact your health care provider to begin prenatal care.

No health insurance? You may be eligible for special health insurance for pregnant women. Call 1-800-456-8900 for more information.



Why early prenatal care?

Prenatal care is important because it allows a medical professional to:

- Monitor your health and address any of your health concerns
- Monitor the baby's progress
- Prescribe prenatal vitamins
- Manage any medical problems in a way that is best for you and for your baby
- Adjust medications to be safe for you and your baby
- Explain about changes in your body that you are experiencing
- Advise about what to expect next
- Help you plan for the delivery of your baby

Vitamins and Minerals during Pregnancy

Usually a pregnant woman will be prescribed a prenatal vitamin to help supplement key vitamins and minerals. Healthy eating and a prenatal vitamin will help ensure sufficient amounts of the following key vitamins and minerals for you and your developing baby.

There are several vitamins and minerals that are especially important during pregnancy.

Folic Acid (vitamin B9): Important for the development of your baby's nervous system, and plays an important role in preventing spina bifida, a defect in the development of the spinal cord.

Leafy greens, dried and fresh beans, sunflower seeds, and fortified cereals all are high in folic acid and other B vitamins.

Iron: Pregnant women need extra iron; it is a key component in the red blood cells that is responsible for carrying oxygen to the cells in your body and your baby's body. Getting sufficient iron helps prevent anemia, which is linked to higher risk for premature births.

Red meat, poultry, and egg yolks are the best sources of iron, but it is also found in dark leafy greens and some fortified cereals.

Calcium: Calcium is essential for the development of bones and cell function. The pregnant woman's body will take from its calcium supply to provide enough for the baby's bone development, but can increase her risk for osteoporosis; therefore, it is vital that pregnant women get enough calcium.

Calcium mainly comes from dairy products—milk, yogurt, cheese, but also can be found in fortified orange juice.

Vitamin D: Works with calcium to facilitate the formation of bone. It also is important in immune system functioning. Low levels of vitamin D have been linked to increased risks of premature delivery.

Exposure to sunshine is the main source of vitamin D. Exposing the face and arms to 5-15 minutes of midday sunlight three or four times a week is sufficient to maintain levels. Selected foods such as milk, orange juice, and cereals may be fortified with vitamin D. Check the labels to be sure.